

CAMBRIDGE  
DEPARTMENT  
OF PUBLIC  
**THE  
WORKS**



City of Cambridge  
Department of Public Works

# Five Year **Sidewalk and Street** Reconstruction Plan

5.1.2016

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# INTRODUCTION | COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are **streets for everyone**. They are designed and operated to enable **safe access for all users**. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities are able to safely move along and across a complete street. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They help buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.

More sidewalks and bicycle facilities are included, which provides for **increased accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists**.

During design and construction of complete streets, our goal is to communicate projects with neighborhoods and facilitate an integrated design process; minimize disruption to community life; and provide reasonable access for all users during reconstruction.

*This is intended to be a living document that will be updated regularly as conditions change.*

# PRIORITIES | CONSTRAINTS / UNCERTAINTIES

- Based on budget predictions that are uncertain.
- Based on sewer separation / storm water management project schedules that are uncertain.
- Based on future street condition assessments that are subject to change.
- Does not consider utility failure / repair / replacement which is unpredictable.
- Severe winter conditions can lead to higher than expected levels of deterioration on streets.



DPW will review the Plan on an annual basis. The uncertainties are significant and thus the annual revisions may also need to be significant.

# PRIORITIES | SCHEDULING

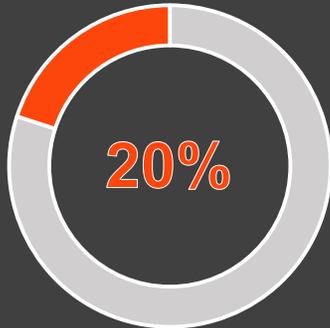


Reconstruct sidewalks and streets in poor condition in **high priority areas**:

- Areas within a 150 ft. buffer of parks, major squares, libraries, schools, youth centers, elderly housing, and senior centers.
- Areas within a 40 ft. buffer of bus routes.
- Major thoroughfares to maintain the structural integrity of streets under heavy traffic.
- Commission for Persons with Disabilities' priorities.
- Areas with non-existent or inadequate bicycle facilities, particularly where reconstruction could improve connectivity and route continuity for cyclists.

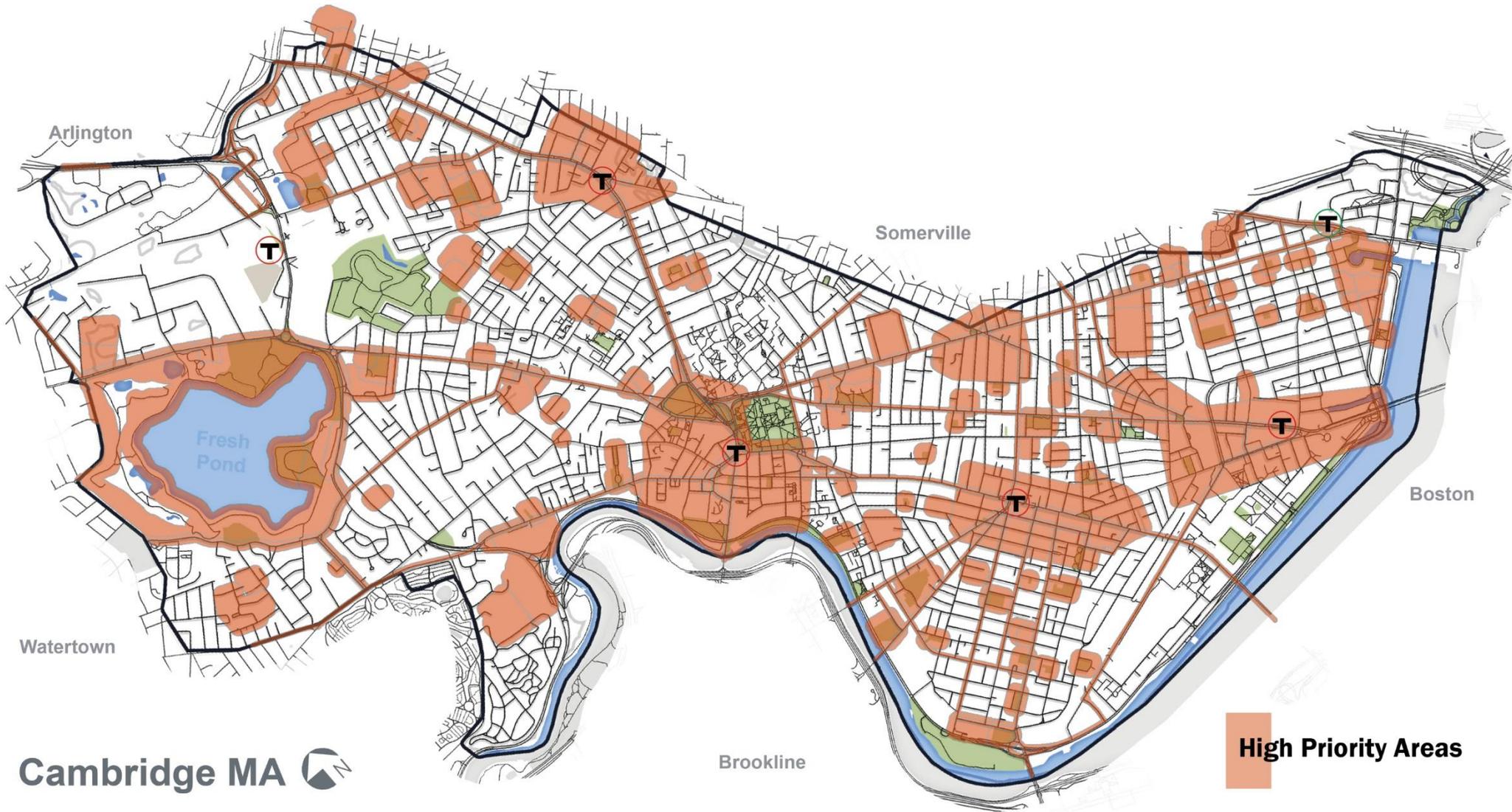


Just over 50% of city sidewalks and streets are located outside of high priority areas. These corridors serve residential connections and need to be maintained, to the extent funding allows.

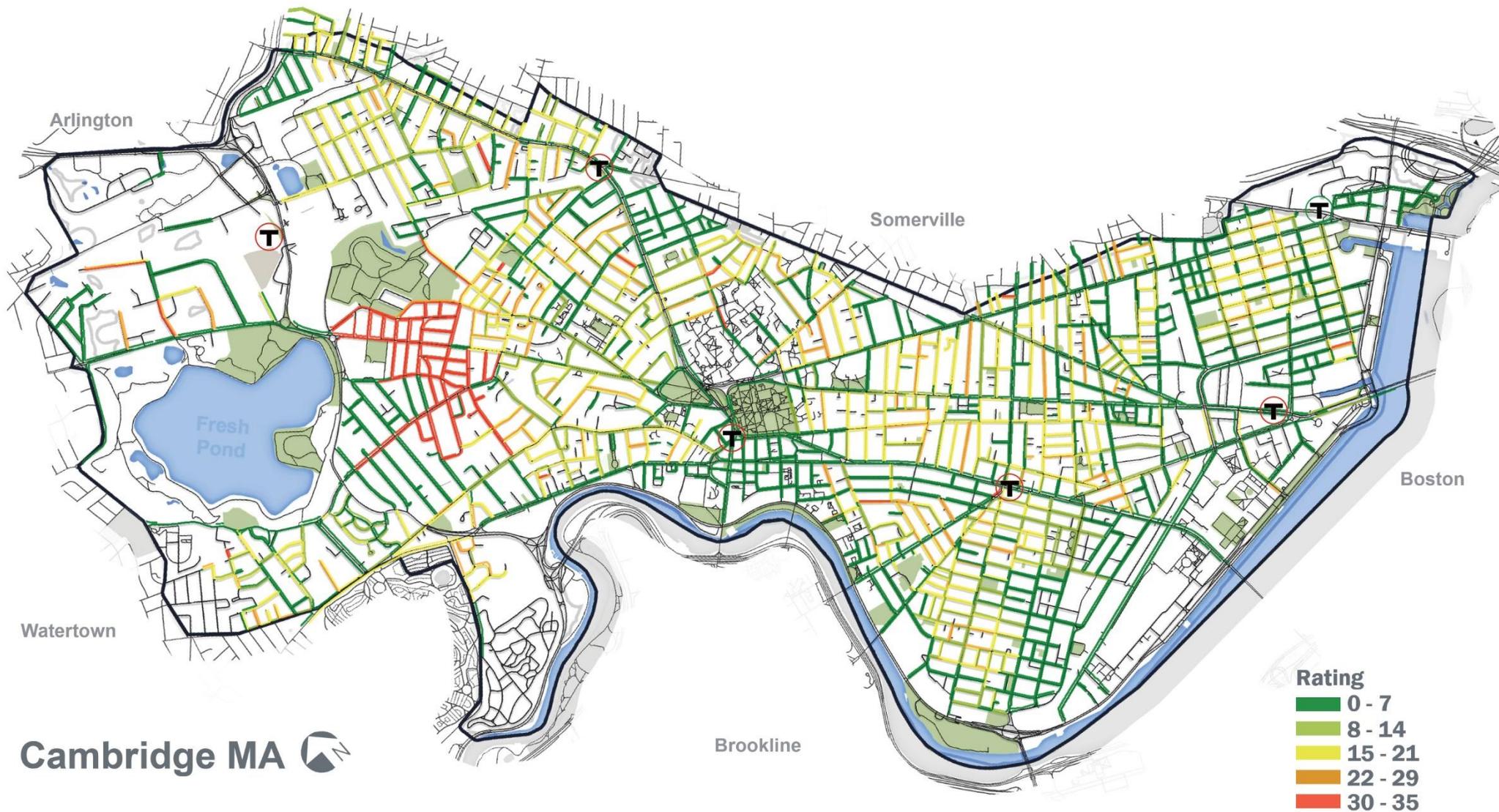


Approximately 20% of street and sidewalk funding will be reserved for these locations.

# PRIORITIES | FOCUS AREAS



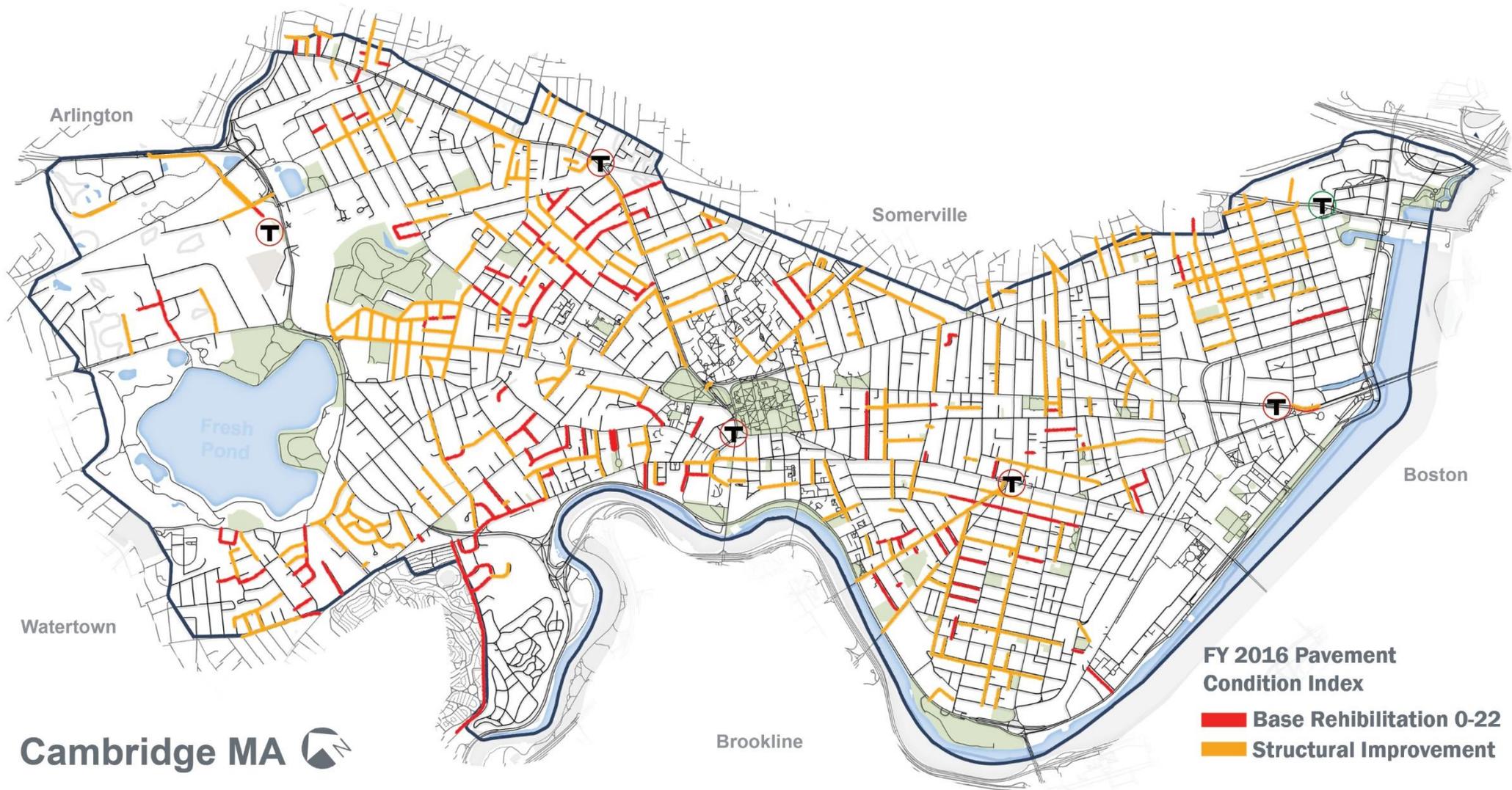
# PRIORITIES | SIDEWALK CONDITIONS



Based on the criteria below, each block of sidewalk received a rating between 0 (excellent) and 35 (poor)

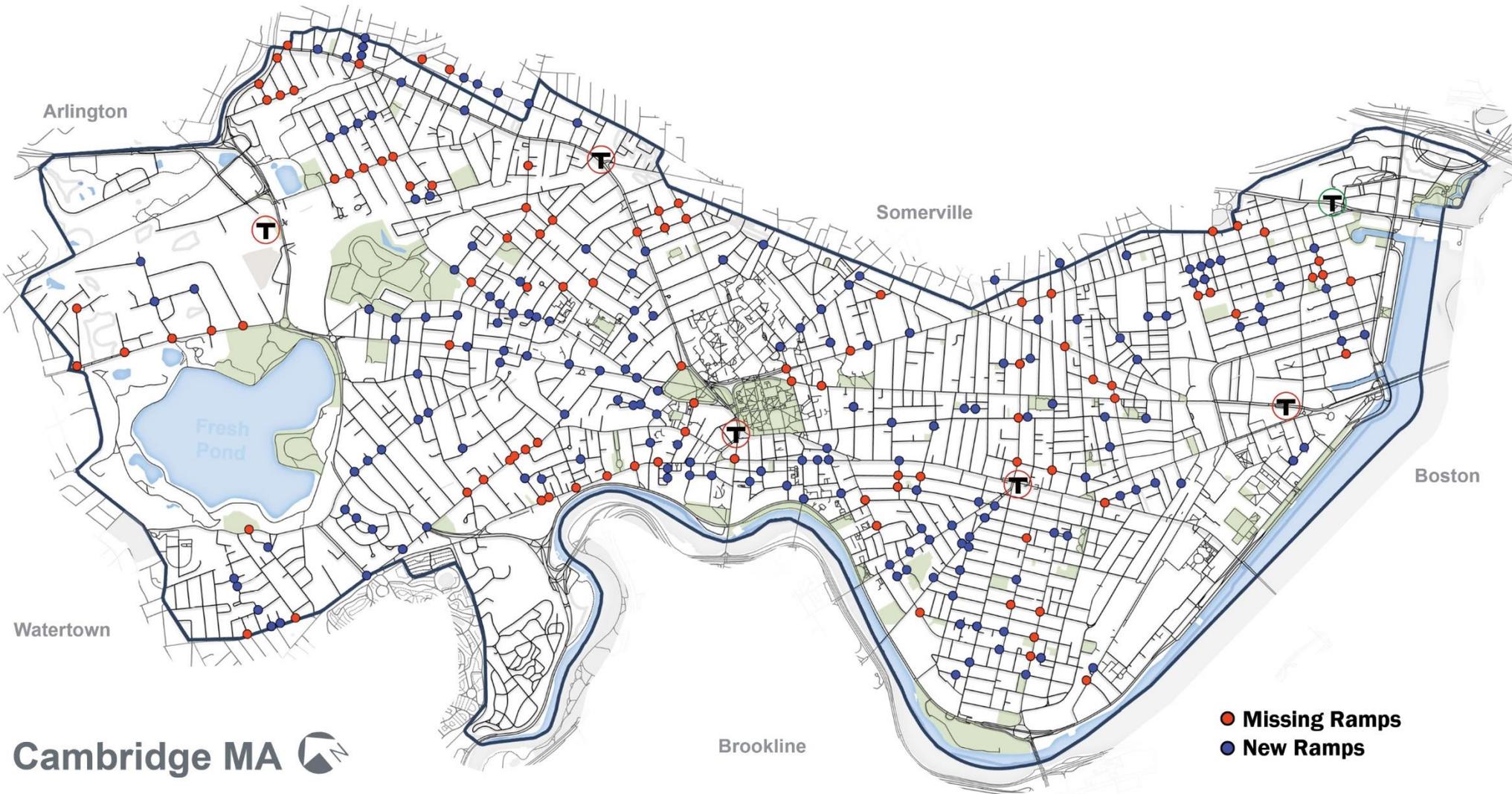
- Driveway conditions
- Trees or other obstructions
- Cross-slope
- Overall structural condition

# PRIORITIES | PAVEMENT CONDITIONS



New street condition assessments are completed every three years and the plan is updated accordingly.

# PRIORITIES | RAMPS



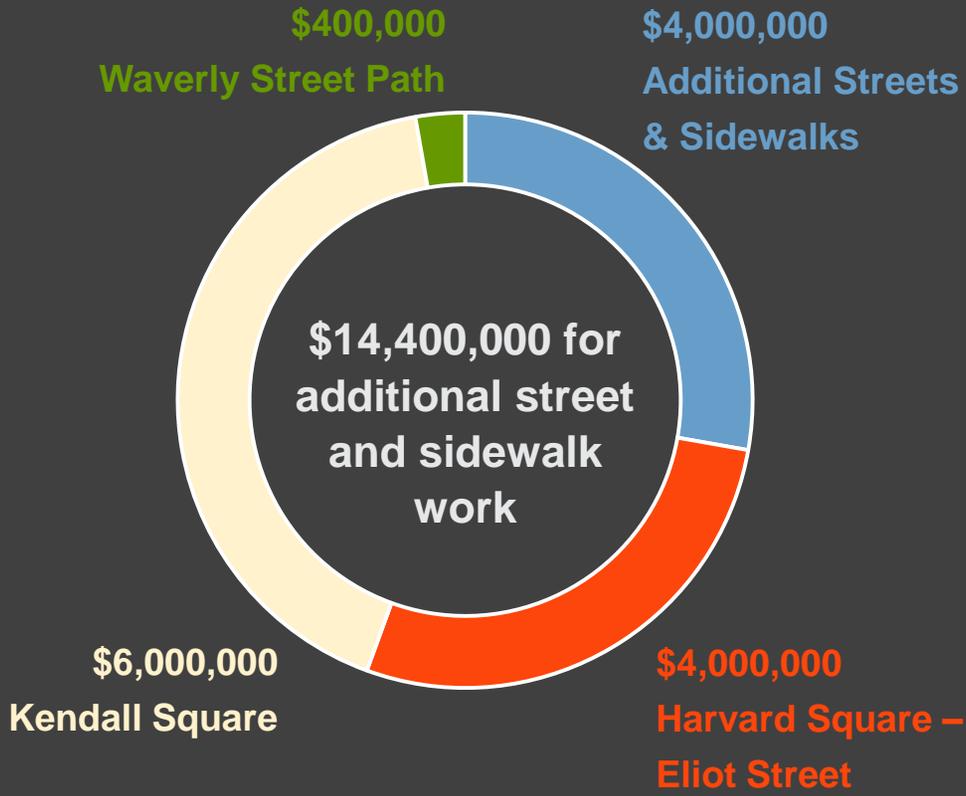
**2009 to 2012** - Constructed 220 previously missing ramps

The City of Cambridge will continue to prioritize missing ramps on major arterials:  
Concord Ave, Huron Ave, Mass. Ave, and Western Ave

# PRIORITIES | FUNDING

This plan assumes \$4.5 million per year for street and sidewalk reconstruction. Additional funds are occasionally allocated for additional enhancement projects or for other street and sidewalk restoration projects. The sewer separation and stormwater management program is funded at \$25M - \$30M per year, and funds streets and sidewalks (see pages 14-16).

Over the last three years, the City also appropriated the following:



# 5 YEAR PLAN | SCOPE OF WORK

Our approach emphasizes **streets designed and operated for everyone** – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transportation users of all ages and abilities will be able to safely move along and across **complete streets**.



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Any crossing islands or medians shall be built or retrofitted to accommodate accessible pedestrian crossings.



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To improve bicycle accommodation, streets are evaluated for appropriate bicycle facilities such as bicycle lanes, cycle tracks, contra-flow lanes, shared lane markings and bicycle parking (see page 24).



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Utility work in the public right of way will meet accessibility requirements and professional engineering standards (see page 23).



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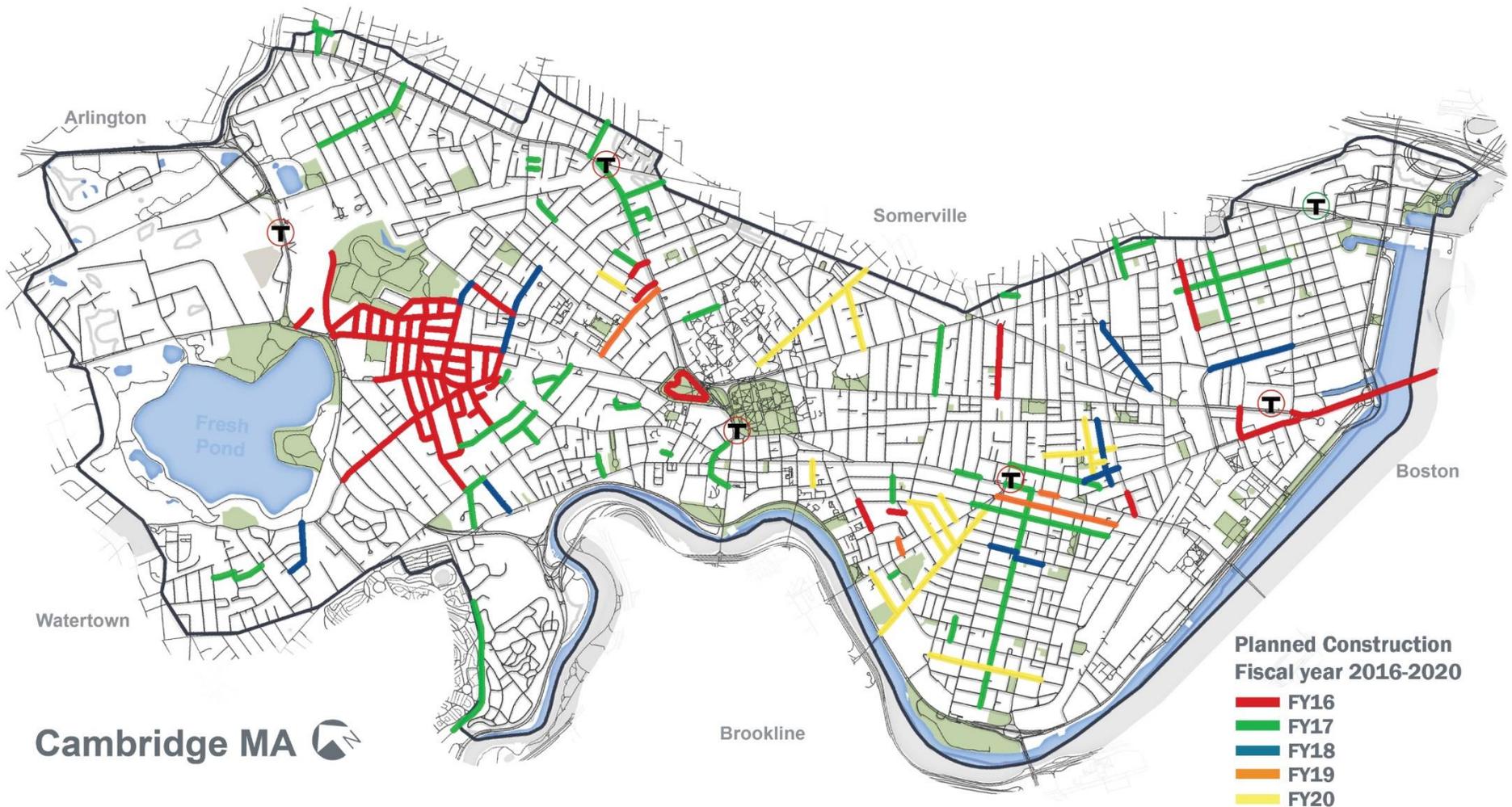
Projects will include planting additional street trees (see page 25).



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To improve access, all pedestrian ramps will be reconstructed.

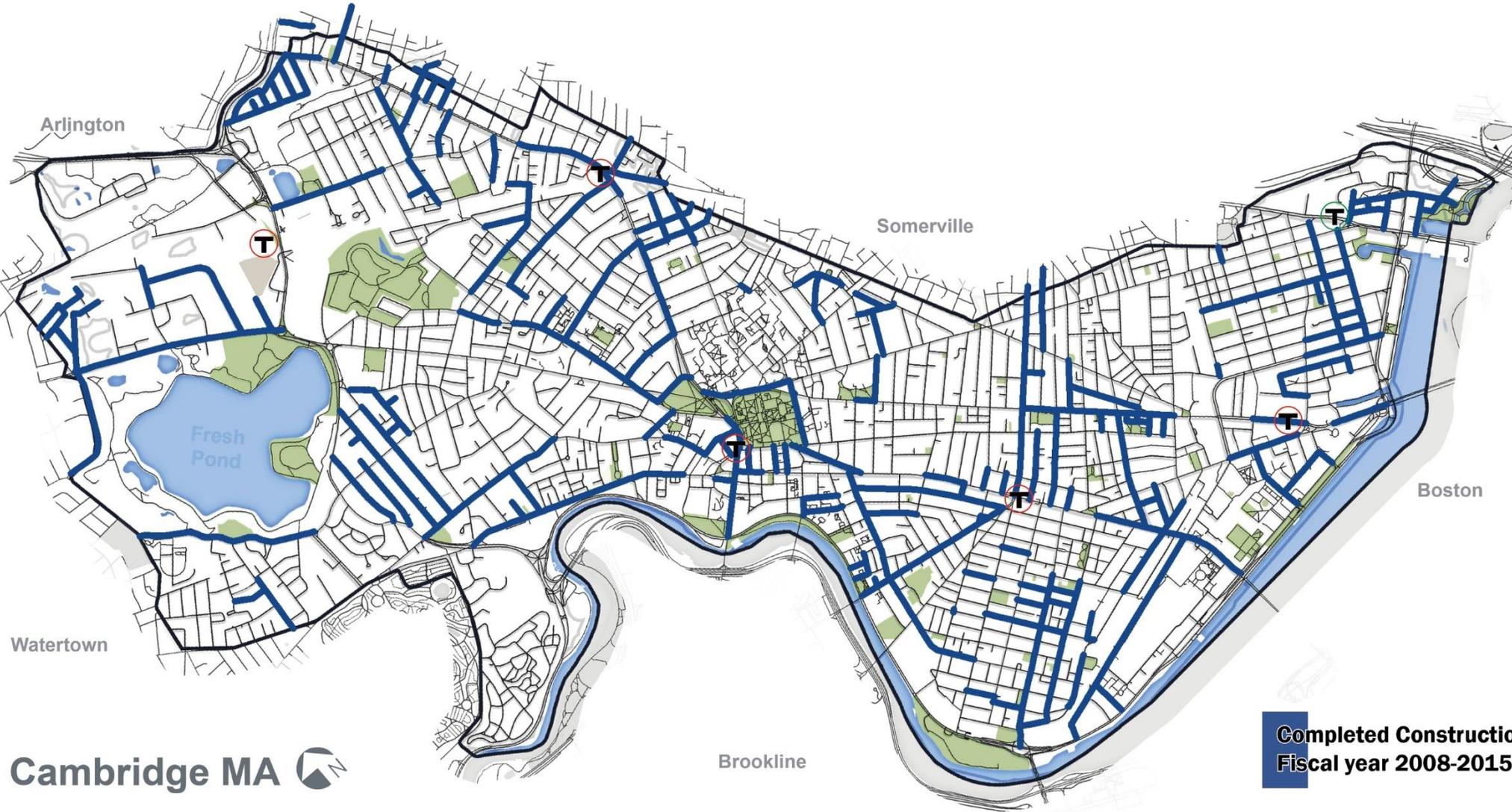
# 5 YEAR PLAN | **PLANNED CONSTRUCTION**



The below link provides an **interactive construction map**, identifying street segments where construction is scheduled over the next five years, as well as recently completed projects. The degree of uncertainty concerning, locations, scope and schedule increases in the later years of the plan.

[www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/constructionmap](http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/constructionmap)

# 5 YEAR PLAN | COMPLETED STREETS

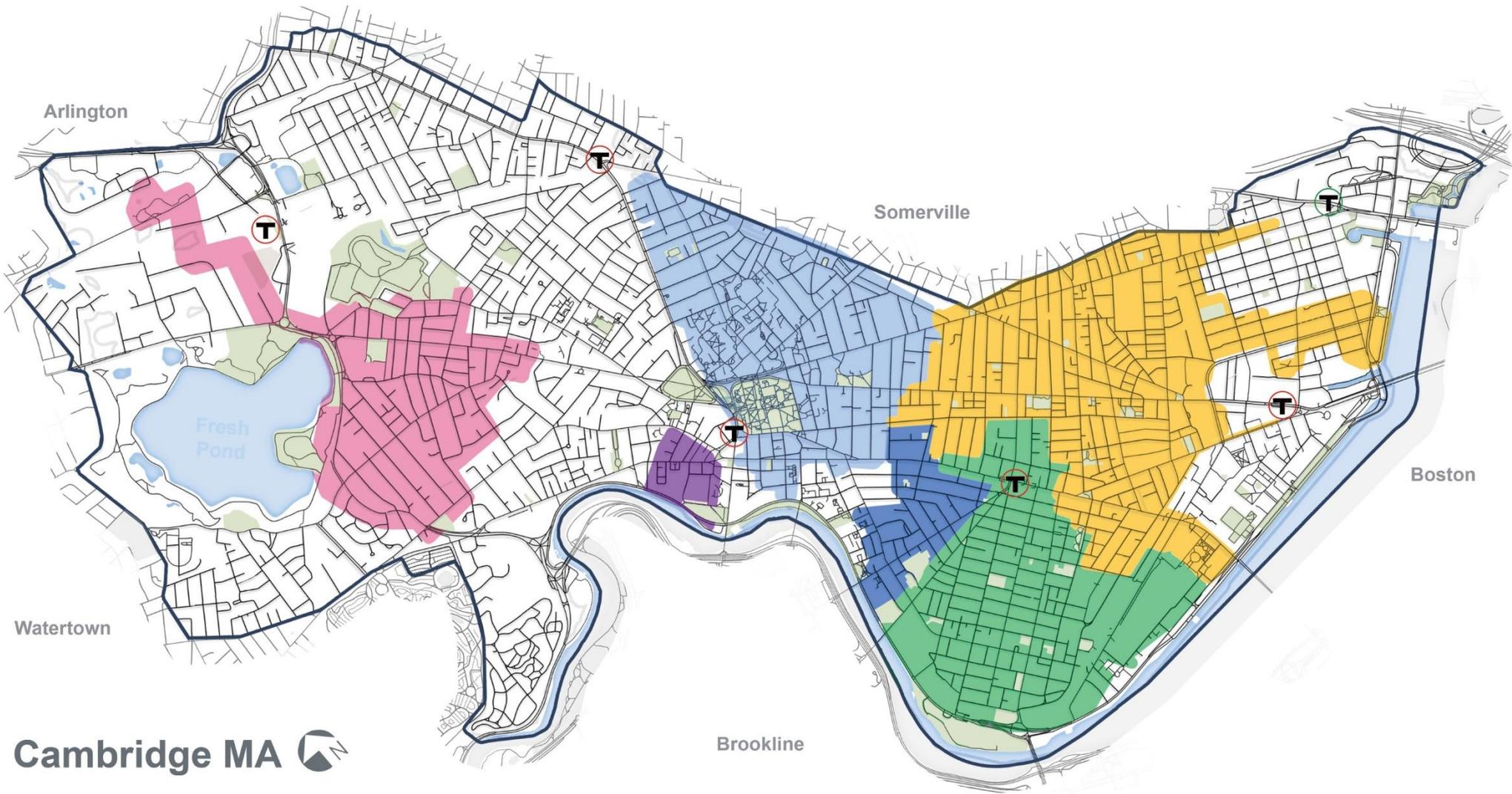


# PROGRAMS | SEWER SEPARATION & STORMWATER

The City has an ongoing 5-Year Capital Program for sewer separation, stormwater management and infrastructure renewal throughout the city. The City is committed to **restoring and enhancing streets, sidewalks and bicycle facilities** as an integral part of these projects. These projects are subject to change in schedule due to financial, legal, environmental and level of service considerations.



# PROGRAMS | SEWER SEPARATION & STORMWATER



Cambridge MA 

-  Alewife / Fresh Pond Area
-  Western Avenue
-  The Port / East Cambridge Area
-  Harvard Square
-  Cambridgeport Area
-  Agassiz / Mid Cambridge Area

# PROGRAMS | SEWER SEPARATION & STORMWATER

Since the 1800's thousands of hours of engineering and millions of dollars of construction have been allocated to realize a more efficient and environmentally-friendly system.



BROADWAY AND DANA STREET, DECEMBER 1, 1931



- Sewer separation continues today and the city's collection system currently includes approximately 104 miles of sanitary sewer, 88 miles of stormwater drains, and 29 miles of combined sewer.
- Approximately 30% of the collection system owned and maintained by Cambridge has been separated—much work remains.
- Projects involve intense construction and typically include rebuilding roadways and sidewalks.

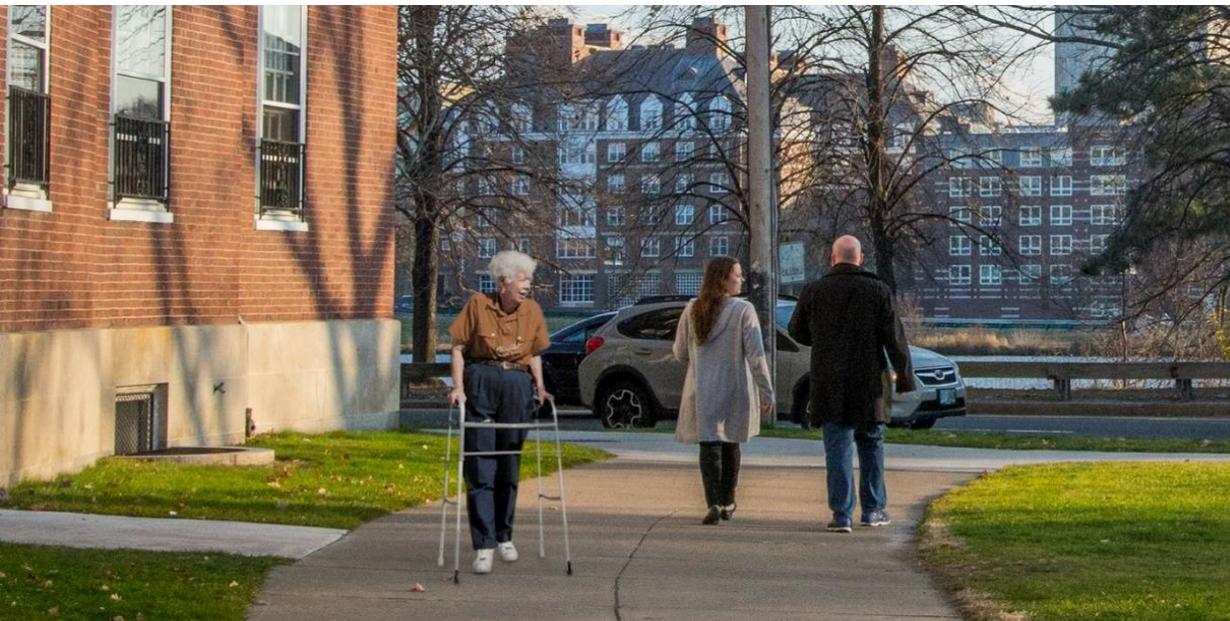
# PROGRAMS | MISCELLANEOUS SIDEWALK

## Program Highlights

- Budget: \$500,000 per year
- This program is used to address discrete sections of sidewalk throughout the city.
- Repairs are typically a block in length, but can be as small as one panel.
- Priority is given to sidewalks and curb cuts in High Priority Areas.

## Accessibility

A portion of the Miscellaneous Sidewalk Program funding will be reserved for **sidewalks and curb cuts** where access is of acute importance, as identified by the **Commission for Persons with Disabilities** and DPW. If you know of a location that is a critical access issue and is not addressed in the 5 Year Plan, please contact the Commission.



### **Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities**

Michael Muehe, Executive Director  
Kate Thurman, Disability Project Coordinator  
51 Inman Street, second floor  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
ccpd@cambridgema.gov  
Voice: 617-349-4692 / TTY: 617-492-0235  
Fax: 617-349-4766  
[www.cambridgema.gov/disabilities](http://www.cambridgema.gov/disabilities)

# DESIGN | PEDESTRIAN RAMPS



Pedestrian ramps are a critical element of the **accessible sidewalk**. The details of the design and construction have a significant impact on their usability.

- All new pedestrian ramps, including landing areas, will be concrete and include tactile warning strips.
- All slopes will meet ADA / AAB requirements.
- All new pedestrian ramps will be designed to:
  - Minimize ponding.
  - Locate ramps as close to the intersection as possible.

The best design for pedestrian crossings, particularly on narrow side streets, may be a modified raised crosswalk that:

- Allows pedestrians to cross the street without having to ramp down.
- Reduces the risk of ponding.
- Keeps the crossing more in line with the sidewalk.

# CONSTRUCTION | PEDESTRIAN ACCESS



## 4-WAY INTERSECTIONS

Unless site conditions warrant a different treatment, 4 crosswalks and 8 pedestrian ramps should be provided.



## MID-BLOCK CROSSINGS

Are generally not used, unless the blocks are especially long or there is an especially large pedestrian flow.



## “T” INTERSECTIONS

At least 1 crosswalk and 2 pedestrian ramps are required for accessible path of travel along the main corridor. Site conditions are considered to determine if crosswalks should be provided.



# DESIGN | SIDEWALK MATERIALS

## Pedestrian Ramps

All new pedestrian ramps, including landing areas, will be concrete, and include tactile warning strips.

## Sidewalk Materials

Concrete and wire cut brick without beveled edges, placed on a smooth asphalt base, will be utilized as the sidewalk materials of choice throughout the City. Concrete is the material most frequently used in the city (~70%) and provides a relatively inexpensive, durable and easy to maintain accessible sidewalk.

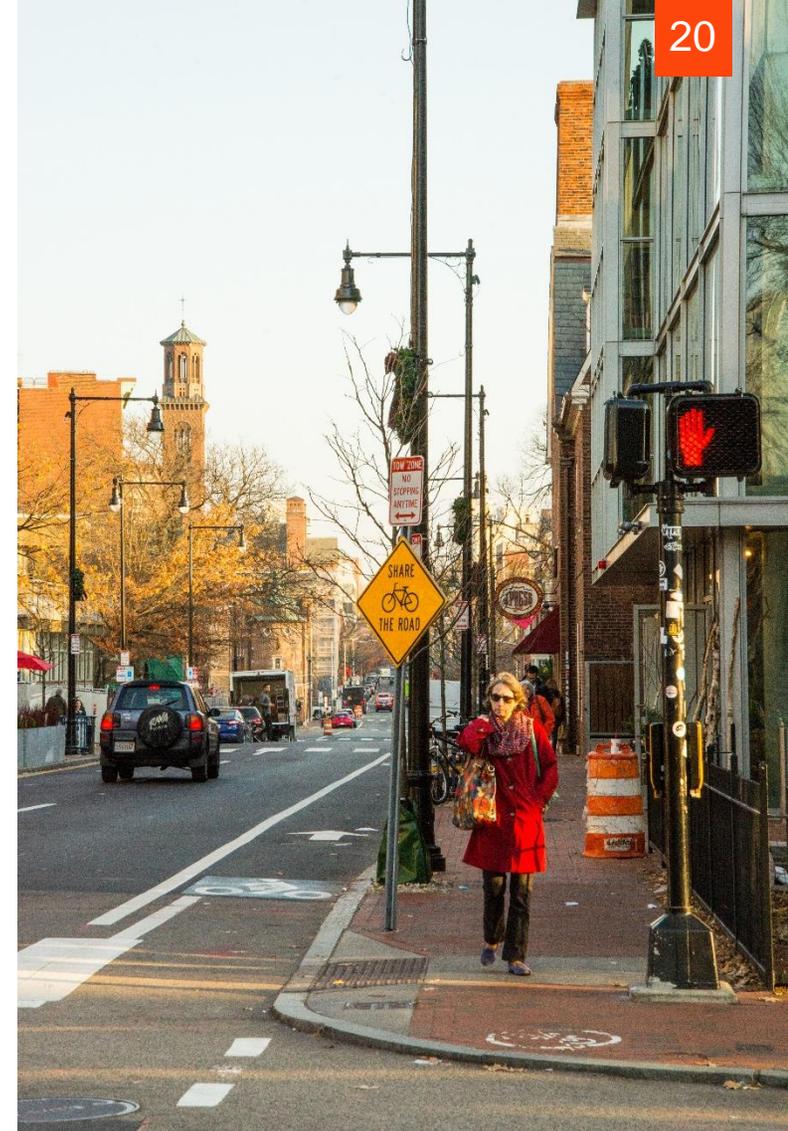
The City policy is to replace existing sidewalks with the same material at no cost to the property owner. However, during construction, property owners are contacted and may choose to change the sidewalk material. On larger projects, a more unified approach to sidewalk materials has been implemented as part of a community process.

## Historic Districts

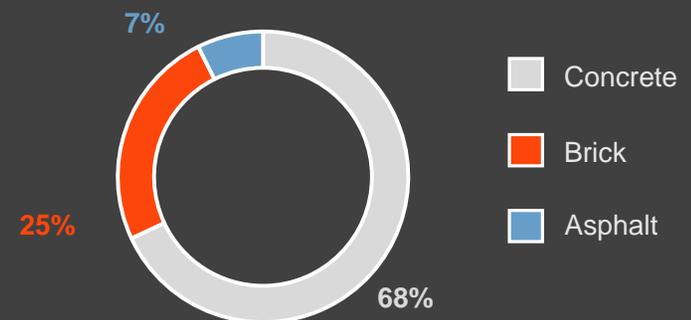
DPW works collaboratively with the Historic Commission to ensure that sidewalk reconstruction work is appropriate and not incongruous to the district.

### Standard Details

[cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/engineering/Resources/standarddetails](http://cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/engineering/Resources/standarddetails)



Sidewalk Materials

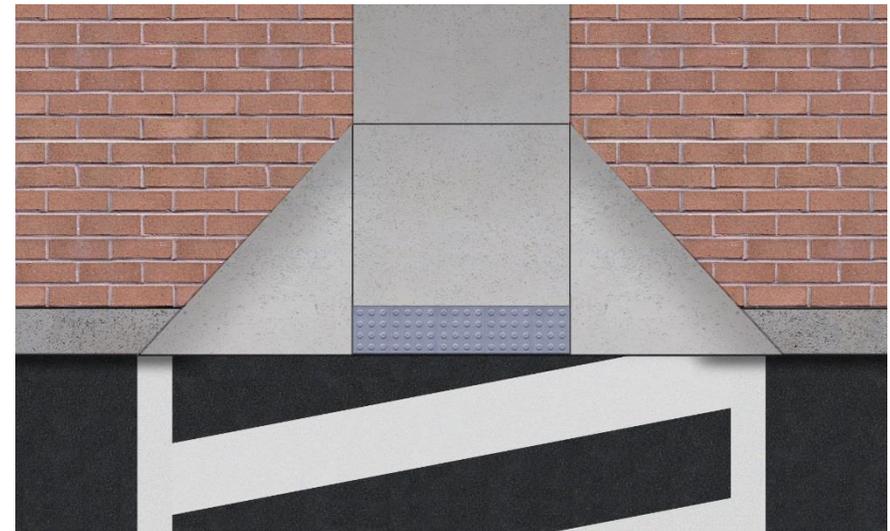


# SCOPE | NEW CONSTRUCTION

## City Projects

Below are the requirements specific to all City of Cambridge construction projects in the Public Right of Way. The goals of these requirements are to meet state and federal regulations, maximize **accessibility improvements** and minimize the extent to which work has to be reconstructed in the future.

- New sidewalks (concrete or brick) will meet ADA / AAB requirements.
- Roadway paving that abuts pedestrian ramps will include the reconstruction of abutting non-compliant pedestrian ramps.
- 15' Rule: To minimize the need for non-compliant transition segments between old and new sidewalks, if a compliant segment within 15 ft. of the end of proposed new work is identified, work will be extended to the compliant segment.
- If a significant portion of sidewalk on a given side of a block is reconstructed, the entire sidewalk on that side should be compliant.



# SCOPE | NEW CONSTRUCTION



## Private Entities

Requirements specific to street and sidewalk reconstruction projects constructed by private entities within the City of Cambridge Public Right of Way will adhere to the same requirements as City projects in addition to the below requirements:

- If a full block of sidewalk is being reconstructed, a PE stamped design will be required and a PE certification of compliance will be required after construction.
- If more than 30 ft. of sidewalk, a curb cut, or a driveway is being constructed, a survey and design will generally be required. Survey and design requirements will be determined by DPW based on the specific location.

# SCOPE | NEW CONSTRUCTION

## Private Utilities

Below are the requirements specific to all street and sidewalk reconstruction projects constructed by private utilities within the City of Cambridge Public Right of Way.



- Sidewalk construction subsequent to utility work will meet ADA / AAB requirements.
- Roadway paving, subsequent to utility work, that abuts pedestrian ramps, will include the reconstruction of abutting non-compliant pedestrian ramps.
- If a full block of sidewalk is being reconstructed, due to utility work, a PE stamped design will be required and a PE certification of compliance will be required after construction.
- If more than 30 ft. of contiguous sidewalk, a curb cut, or a driveway is being constructed, due to utility work, a survey and design will generally be required. Survey and design requirements will be determined by DPW based on the specific location.
- In lieu of final restoration payments (Street Preservation Offset Fees), made by utility companies, will include the complete cost of the necessary sidewalk restoration required.

# SCOPE | BICYCLE PLAN



Streets and projects are evaluated in coordination with the **Cambridge Bicycle Plan** to identify streets with non-existent or inadequate bicycle facilities, particularly where reconstruction could improve connectivity and route continuity for cyclists.

# SCOPE | STREET TREES

## New Tree Plantings

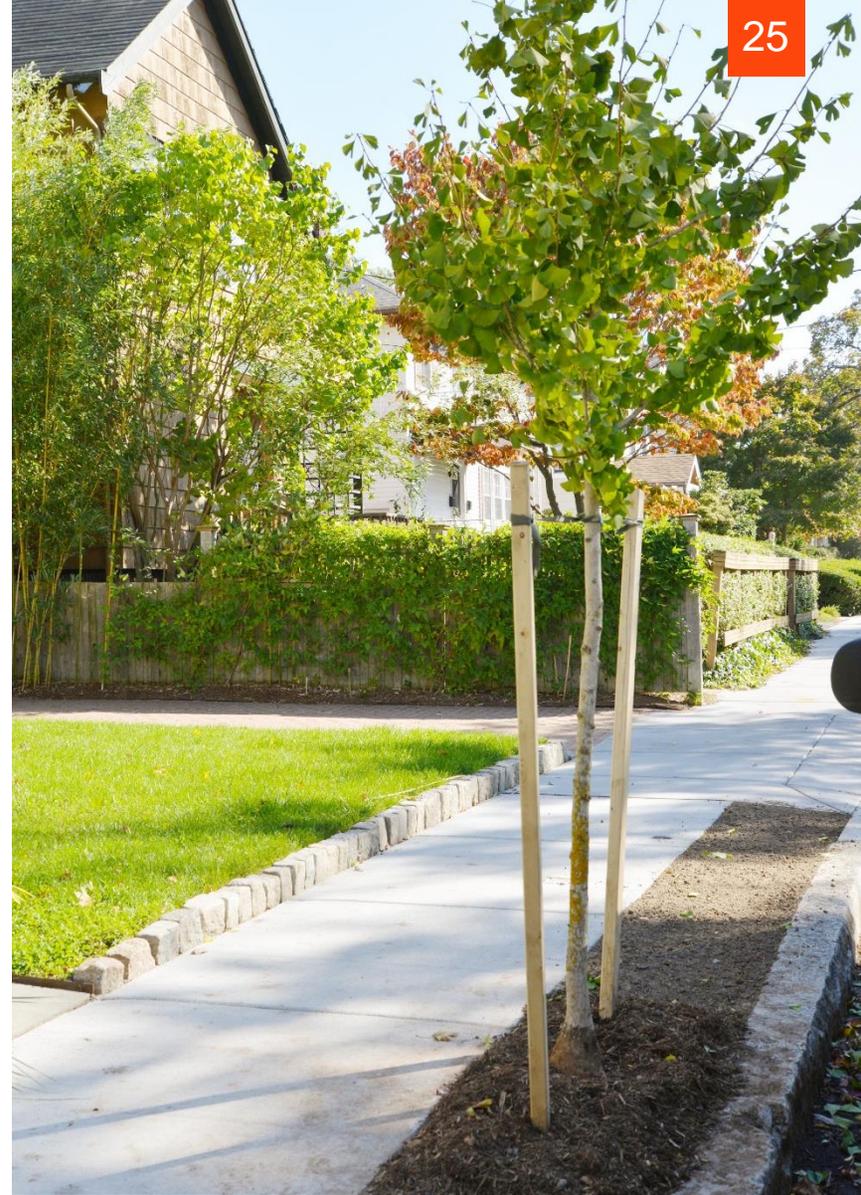
The City Arborist will review each street and sidewalk project to determine tree planting opportunities; evaluating the location of overhead and underground utilities, proximity to intersections, site lines, building setbacks, locations of entrances, etc. The Arborist will also work with residents interested in back of sidewalk tree plantings.

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/urbanforestry.aspx>

- On **narrow sidewalks** (less than 8' wide), a minimum of 4' of sidewalk width will be retained adjacent to new trees.
- On **wider sidewalks** (8' wide or greater), a minimum of ½ of the overall sidewalk width will be retained for pedestrians.

## Existing Street Trees

Existing street trees will be protected during construction and the sidewalks will be carefully evaluated to ensure adequate accessible routes through the neighborhood.



## GOALS

- **Protect existing** street trees during construction.
- Increase the number of street trees and maintain **accessible sidewalks**.

# SCOPE | TRAFFIC SIGNALS

## Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS)

APS work in conjunction with visual pedestrian signals to provide additional information to pedestrians, including pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired. APS typically use a combination of auditory and vibrotactile information to alert pedestrians as to when they should cross the street.

The City is implementing APS at new and existing signalized intersections. The Traffic Department consults with the Disabilities Commission to prioritize location.

## Signal Control Cabinets

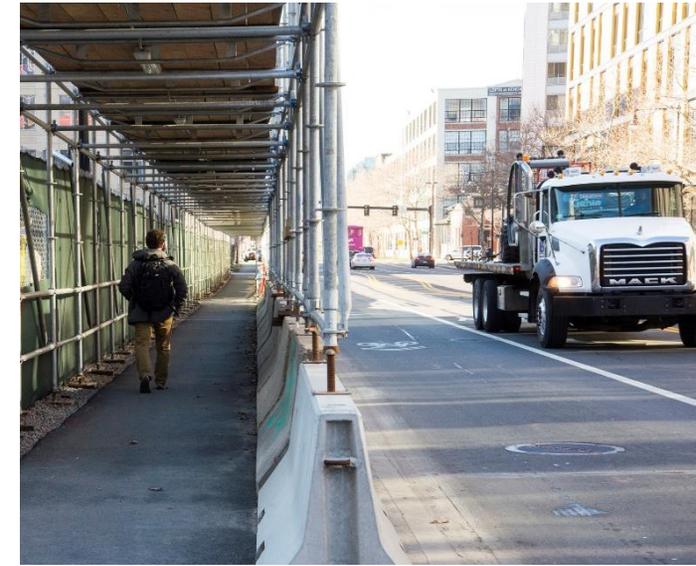
Traffic signal control cabinets mounted on poles are under consideration for relocation by the Traffic Department. In coordination with adjacent construction projects, and at high priority locations, control cabinets will be moved to ground mounted locations.



# CONSTRUCTION | PEDESTRIAN ACCESS



Where pedestrian routes are closed, alternate pedestrian routes shall be provided.



The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, (MUTCD), published by the US DOT / Federal Highway Administration, includes specific requirements for pedestrian access in work zones.



Whenever possible, work should be done in a manner that does not create a need to detour pedestrians from existing routes or crossings.

# CONSTRUCTION | BICYCLE ACCESS

- Maintain bicycle access through construction sites. Where maintaining bike lanes is not possible:
  - Ensure adequate space for bicycles in travel lane.
  - Post “Bicycles May Use Full Lane” signs.
- Road signs of any type should not be placed in bicycle lanes.
- Asphalt is the preferred temporary surface option.
- Surfaces should be smooth, and edges should be uniform.
- When steel plates are required, provide advance notice and a smooth transition.
- Where raised castings are exposed, spray paint them pink and post caution signs.



# NEXT STEPS | CONCLUSION



The 5 Year Plan is a living document that will be updated regularly. As part of that process, DPW will:

- Review plan annually with the Commission for Persons with Disabilities and Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit Committees.
- Update the pavement condition and sidewalk condition data and corresponding maps.
- Annually update the 5 Year Plan to account for the changing conditions of our streets and sidewalks.

Send questions or comments to:  
Katherine Watkins, PE  
City Engineer  
Department of Public Works  
[kwatkins@cambridgema.gov](mailto:kwatkins@cambridgema.gov) or  
617-349-4751



**For more information:**

City of Cambridge  
Department of Public Works  
147 Hampshire Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4800

[www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/fiveyearplan](http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/fiveyearplan)

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